



Brook Road Allotment Association

Newsletter July 2011

Welcome to the July Newsletter, more than half the year gone but still lots of growing, weeding and watering. With the early potatoes and onion sets now being lifted thoughts are moving on to sowing for late autumn and over winter. I seem to be struggling with my cabbage seeds this year, I think the weather was too hot for easy germination a few weeks ago so need to think again! The few days muggy weather at the end of June may possibly have been enough to encourage potato and tomato blight so if you have a mind to, start spraying soon. Hopefully the boffins have come up with a suitable replacement for Dithane as that has been removed from the market now.

Talking about watering, at risk of trying to teach granny to suck eggs consider the following! Remember a hose licence is needed if you want to use one for watering plants. The hose must be hand held whilst switched on, not propped on a spade/fork handle or left lying on the ground. Water sensibly; it is a waste of time spraying it over the tops of plants unless you are hoping to set your runner beans. Direct the water to the roots of the plants, when you think you've done enough, may I suggest you scratch the surface and see just how wet the ground has become you may be surprised just how dry the ground still is. Think, are you wasting your time? If you fill your can from the dipping tank by your plot, please can you remember to refill it for the water to come up to temperature for the next person? Remember we are very fortunate at Brook Road to have the luxury of water on tap and the option of using a hose, other sites don't have this facility so please use it wisely I would hate to lose it.

Show time is on the way. This year, as usual we will be staging an exhibit at Kinson Horticultural Show in Pelhams Park, Kinson on the 6th of August. Our stalwart band of helpers would be delighted for any extra pairs of hands willing to help on the day. This can range from:

- helping put up the marquee first thing in the morning, many hands make light work!
- filling the 'alloti-boxes' for the raffle prizes, by the way, if any-one has a source of the free blue plastic trays we use for these, please can they let us have some.
- Surplus produce can be left in the gap behind the site hut/store or given to any committee member on Friday 5th Aug or very early on the Saturday morning, or failing that brought to the show.
- Helping John to sell raffle tickets once the show opens around lunch time,
- persuading the general public to 'buy' the surplus produce we have on our stall.
- Enjoying a chat with fellow allotmenters, a good way to get to know people!
- Helping to clear up at the end of the day, always welcome.
- Stay with us all day or just for half an hour

- Don't forget to enter the main show; numbers were significantly down last year. Show schedules can probably be obtained from the office at Pelhams. I was lucky last year and won a pound for the heaviest potato with a scruffy Cara, try it you may get lucky too!

We also welcome donations of surplus produce to be able to stage our exhibit and 'sell' to the general public. This is our major fund raiser now as all the other shows no longer run.

After Kinson comes our own Show and Open Day. This is on Sunday the 28th August, complete with a Hog Roast. (Veggie option available).

Free to enter, a lot of fun but no cash prizes. Watch out for a revised show schedule and further details any time soon.

Tickets for the hog roast must be obtained in advance from Brian Trim, Sylvia or Peter Kembery, Margaret Good or Doff Davies by the 20th August. We are making a nominal charge of £1 per ticket to members, in order to be able to cater for all who wish to join in whilst minimising waste.

The allotments will be open to the public between 1.30 and 4.00pm to look around the site, see the show, buy tombola tickets and surplus produce. We will be delighted to receive offers of help on the day, any **unwanted gifts** you may have suitable for **tombola prizes** and nearer the day any surplus produce. Watch the notice board for further information.

Brians Bees have been doing sterling work on any flower that opens on site. This has resulted in excellent pollination and setting of fruit crops. Brian has now placed information on the notice board regarding who to contact and what to do in the event of a swarm.

Thank you to the new members who attended the welcome meeting in May, I hope you found it helpful and look forward to chatting with you on site from time to time.

I would also like to thank Vince on behalf of us all for the wonderful job he is making on the border inside the gate.

Remember to look out for info on our show; will you have the longest bean?

Happy growing

Doff